
President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

Expanding Illinois State University's Integrated Systems Technology Program



Grant Amount: \$5,774,420 (\$3,274,420 to expand the curriculum and enhance the apprenticeship model; \$2.5 million to replicate the project in four new states)

Original Grant Amount: \$9,236,026

Leveraged Amount: \$1,926,564 from the state workforce agencies and other local partners from North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wyoming

Key Partners: Eight community colleges and six state workforce agencies

Grant Activities will take place in Illinois, Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wyoming

Challenge: As production equipment and processes become more technology-intensive, American manufacturers require highly skilled workers who can operate, troubleshoot, and maintain complex, integrated technologies.

Addressing the Challenge: With the assistance of grant seed money from the Employment and Training Administration, Illinois State University operates the National Center for Integrated Systems Technology (NCIST) to train new and incumbent workers for jobs that entail setting up and maintaining high-tech integrated systems. Specifically, participants in the program receive training in working with electrical systems, electronics, hydraulics and pneumatics, piping systems, electronic sensors, basic mechanical devices, and how these systems interact with one another. The Integrated Systems Technology (IST) program cross-trains individuals in these advanced skills, and graduates leave with in-depth knowledge of advanced production equipment. IST has proven successful in offering hands-on training with industry-driven curricula. Furthermore, One-Stop Career Centers at the eight existing IST sites in Illinois and Ohio provide assessment, job placement, and supportive services.

Projected Outcomes

Since March 2003, IST graduates have been hired by 186 companies in Illinois and Ohio. With new funding from the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative, ISU's National Center for Integrated Systems Technology will:

- Expand the training curriculum to create an associate degree program;
- Enhance the highly successful apprenticeship model;
- Create a career ladder and lattice by standardizing career competencies; and
- Replicate the IST model in four additional states through regional centers of excellence in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wyoming. These new centers will be developed at four community colleges that have demonstrated their success in partnering with and serving the workforce needs of regional manufacturers.